

**LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for applying business rules ~~on a computer application~~ to data used in a computer application, comprising the steps:

defining a set of business rules, each of the rules determining the validity of data used in an associated, defined computer application;

storing the rules on a table external of the computer application;

for each rule,

invoking the rule at the occurrence of each of a defined set of operations on the data and while the rule is stored in said external table,

identifying a predetermined trigger condition for the rule, and

processing the rule if the predetermined trigger condition is satisfied to determine if data used in the computer application are valid.

2. (Original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the identifying step includes the steps of:

identifying at least one data value;

identifying a trigger value; and

identifying an operator indicating how the data value will be compared to the trigger value.

3. (Currently Amended) A method of applying business rules ~~in a computer application~~ to data used in a computer application, comprising the steps:

defining a set of business rules, each of the rules determining the validity of data in an associated, defined computer application;

storing the rules on a table external of the computer application;

for each rule[:],

invoking the rule at the occurrence of each of a defined set of operations on the data[:]; and  
while the rule is stored in said external table,

identifying a predetermined trigger condition for the rule[:].

invoking a predefined method if the trigger condition is partially satisfied[;], and

using the method to apply the rule to determine ~~a final result of the rule~~ if data used in the computer application are valid.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for managing business rules ~~in a computer application~~ for data used in a computer application, comprising the steps:

establishing a set of business rules, each of the rules including a trigger condition and a process, and each of the rules determining the validity of data in an associated, defined computer application;

storing the rules in a table external of the computer application;

performing a predefined operation on the data;

checking all the rules in the table to determine if any are invoked by the predefined operation;

for each rule that is invoked, determining whether the trigger condition of the rule is satisfied;  
and

for each rule the trigger condition of which is satisfied, implementing the process of the rule and while the rule is stored in said external table to determine if data in the computer application are valid.

5. (Original) A method according to Claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

running an application using the data; and

changing any of the business rules without recompiling or reinstalling the application.

6. (Original) A method according to Claim 4, further comprising the step, upon rule failure, defining a message and help for each rule using visual programming techniques.

7. (Original) A method according to Claim 6, further comprising the step, upon rule execution, adding the help and message to an error message list.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for managing business rules for data used in a computer application, comprising:

means for establishing a set of business rules, each of the rules including a trigger condition and a process, and each of the rules determining the validity of data used in an associated, defined computer application;

a table, external of the computer application, for storing the rules;

means for performing predefined ~~operation~~ operations on the data;

means for checking all the rules in the table to determine if any are invoked by the predefined operation;

means for determining, for each rule that is invoked, whether the trigger condition of the rule is satisfied; and

means for implementing the process of each rule, the trigger condition of which is satisfied, while the rule is stored in said external table to determine if data used in the computer application are valid.

9. (Original) A system according to Claim 8, further comprising:

means for running an application using the data; and

means for changing any of the business rules without recompiling or reinstalling the application.

10. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for managing business rules ~~in a computer application~~ for data used in a computer application, said method steps comprising:

establishing a set of business rules, each of the rules including a trigger condition and a process, and each of the rules determining the validity of data in an associated, defined computer application;

storing the rules in a table external of the computer application;

performing a predefined operation on the data;

checking all the rules in the table to determine if any are invoked by the predefined operation;

for each rule that is invoked, determining whether the trigger condition of the rule is satisfied;  
and

for each rule the trigger condition of which is satisfied, implementing the process of the rule while the rule is stored in said external table to determine if data used in the computer application are valid.

11. (Original) A program storage device according to Claim 10, wherein said method steps further comprise:

running an application using the data; and

changing any of the business rules without recompiling or reinstalling the application.

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 4, wherein each rule specifies the conditions under which the rule is invoked.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 4, comprising the further step of changing the business rules, wherein said changing does not require any changes to the associated application.

14. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 4, comprising the further steps of:

providing a list of subtriggers; and

creating the trigger for each rule from the list of subtriggers.